

CASINO CARD GAME

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to casino gaming, and more particularly pertains to video and live table versions of a casino card game.

2. Description of the Related Technology

10 U.S. Patent No. 6,435,507, entitled "Table-Slots Game And Method Of Play," issued to Joseph R. Trucksess on August 20, 2002, discloses a casino table card game incorporating some characteristics of slot machine play into a live casino table card game. The entire disclosure of U.S. Patent No. 6,435,507 is hereby incorporated herein by this reference thereto.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Live casino table card game and video card game versions of a casino card game employ a deck of cards bearing symbols commonly found on slot machines including orange, cherry, triple bar, lemon, and plum. Players are afforded opportunities to place ante, bet, and progressive wagers and attempt to win such wagers by obtaining certain predetermined winning arrangements 20 of slot machine symbols on 3, 4, or 5 of their cards in order to obtain payoff amounts on wagers determined pursuant to predetermined payout tables. After placing an initial mandatory ante

wager, a dealer deals five cards to each player and also deals a dealer hand consisting of two communal cards. After inspecting his or her cards, each player is afforded an opportunity to either fold and surrender their ante wager and any progressive wager placed, or to continue play by placing a bet wager in an amount double their ante wager. Each player opting to continue play by 5 placing a bet wager is afforded an opportunity to elect to play either their own first two cards, or the two communal cards of the dealer hand, and also to arrange their third, fourth, and fifth cards in a desired sequence in an attempt to obtain a predetermined winning arrangement of cards. A live casino table version of the game is played with a human dealer on a casino gaming table similar to a blackjack table, while a video version of the game is played using electronic 10 representations of cards displayed on a video game under computer control on an electronic video gaming device similar to a video poker machine.

These and various other advantages and features of novelty that characterize the invention are pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed hereto and forming a part hereof. However, for a better understanding of the invention, its advantages, and the objects 15 obtained by its use, reference should be made to the drawings which form a further part hereof, and to the accompanying descriptive matter, in which there is illustrated and described a preferred embodiment of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

20 Figure 1 is a plan view of a gaming table for playing a live casino table version of a card game according to the present invention.

Figures 2a – 2e are plan views of faces of playing cards used in connection with play of a

card game according to one embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT(S)

The following description of a preferred embodiment is for the purpose of explanation, 5 and not limitation. Some specific details are set forth in order to provide a better understanding of a preferred embodiment of the present invention, however, in other instances, description of other elements, features, and techniques are omitted so as not to encumber or confuse the reader with unnecessary detail. It will be apparent to one skilled in the art that the present invention may be practiced in other embodiments that depart from the following description and that 10 differences may exist from the embodiment specifically described without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. The following detailed description is therefore not to be taken in a limiting sense.

Referring now to the drawings, wherein like reference numerals designate corresponding structure throughout the views, and referring in particular to Figure 1, a plan view 15 of a casino game table 110 for playing a live table version of a card game in accordance with a the present invention is shown. The table 110 preferably has a generally semi-circular top 111 having a covering 112 that is preferably made from felt, but may be made from any other suitable material. The top 111 of the table 110 is of a standard size for a casino table game, and the covering 112 is removable such that it may be placed onto an existing tabletop 110 used in 20 connection with other casino table games, such as blackjack.

The covering 112 includes provisions for a chip rack 114. Indicia used in connection with playing the game, which are described in more detail below, are printed on the covering 112.

The chip rack 114 is located adjacent to the dealer area. The dealer area also includes a dealer hand 115 having card-receiving boxes 117 and 119. The card-receiving boxes include the indicia "1" and "2", respectively. The boxes 117 and 119 are preferably printed or silk-screened onto the covering 112. However, it will be recognized by those skilled in the art from the present disclosure that the boxes 117, 119 can be produced by other suitable means, such as adhering another layer of material to the covering 112.

5 Preferably, seven (7) player positions 130 are also provided. However, the number of player positions can be varied, if desired. The player positions 130 are located around the semi-circular portion of the table 110. Each player position 130 includes indicia on the covering 112 10 designating locations for placement of playing cards for forming the player hand 121. More specifically, the player hand 121 is defined by five (5) card-receiving boxes 123, 125, 127, 129 and 131 which include the printed indicia "1", "2", "3", "4" and "5", respectively. The card-receiving boxes 117, 119, 123, 125, 127, 129 and 131 are preferably sized such that a playing card can be placed within the box. It will be recognized by those skilled in the art from the 15 present disclosure that the particular form, shape and location of the boxes 117, 119, 123, 125, 127, 129 and 131 on the covering 112 may be varied, as desired.

Preferably, each player position 130 also includes first, second and third wagering or ante receiving areas 132, 134 and 136. These are preferably in the form of printed indicia, 20 preferably in the form of circles, located on the covering 112. The first wagering area 132 for receiving a player's ante wager is located in a generally central region of the player location 130, above the indicia designating "PLAYER HAND" and in proximity to the boxes 123 and 125. The ante wager area 132 may also include the indicia "ANTE" preferably printed within the circle

designating the spot for placement of a chip or token for placement of an ante wager. The second wagering area 134 for receiving a player's wager on the player's hand is preferably located above and to the left of the ante wager area 132, and preferably includes the indicia "PLAYER'S HAND" which may be printed within the circle or around its periphery. A third wagering area 5 136 for receiving a player's wager on the dealer's hand is preferably located in proximity to and spaced to the right of, the player's hand wager area 134, and preferably includes the indicia "DEALER'S HAND" which may be printed within the circle or around its periphery. It will be recognized by those skilled in the art from the present disclosure that the number of player ante and wager receiving areas may be varied, if desired, depending upon the number of wagers which 10 are to be made available for a given deal or play.

Each player position 130 preferably also includes a coin slot or acceptor 135 to allow a player an option to place a progressive jackpot wager of the type disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,861,041, entitled "Methods Of Progressive Jackpot Gaming" issued August 29, 1989 to Daniel A. Jones, et al., the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. As an 15 alternative to a slot, a flat disc-shaped coin acceptor may be employed, or simply a spot designated by a circle or other indicia to designate a region for placement of a wager. As disclosed in U.S. Patent 4,861,041, a sign or meter may be provided on or near the gaming table to display a progressive jackpot amount that increases as more players place wagers for the jackpot.

20 It should be noted that other methods of wager placement may be employed in connection with the present invention, such as electronic keypads, touch screens, electronic card readers, and the like.

A cushioned rail 140 is preferably provided about the periphery of the table in the known manner. Printed indicia 141 identifying the game, the casino name or any other desired markings may also be added to the covering 112 in a location that does not interfere with the game layout.

5 Referring now to FIGS. 2a-2e, in a first preferred embodiment, playing cards are provided having indicia which are typical of slot machines. Preferably, the playing cards are provided in a deck of fifty (50) cards, with ten (10) orange cards 42, as shown in FIGS. 2a; ten (10) lemon cards 44, as shown in FIG. 2b; five (5) logo or triple-bar cards 46, which may include a triple bar symbol of the type conventionally employed with slot machines, or, alternatively, any 10 logo, such as the casino logo, as shown in FIG. 2c; twelve (12) plum cards 48, as shown in FIG. 2d; and fifteen (15) cherry cards 50, as shown in FIG. 2e. However, it will be recognized by those skilled in the art from the present disclosure that the number of cards 42, 44, 46, 48, 50 may be varied, as desired, in order to achieve the desired odds for casino wins and/or for a desired payout ratio.

15 In connection with play of a game of the present invention on a live casino gaming table as shown in FIG. 1, preferably the fifty-two (52) card deck described above is utilized. Preferably, the five (5) casino logo cards are replaced with five (5) triple bar cards. However, the other cards remain the same. It will be recognized by those skilled in the art that the number and type of cards can be varied, as desired, and casino logo cards could be used.

20 In order to play a live casino table card game in accordance with the present invention, the above-described deck of cards is shuffled by hand by the dealer and/or placed into an automatic shuffling machine. A second deck may also be shuffled in a similar manner, if desired,

in order to speed play of the game. Each participating player must place a minimum ante wager in the wagering area 132 prior to dealing of any cards. The dealer then deals five cards from the shuffled deck to each player, with the top two cards dealt face down in the “PLAYER HAND” boxes 123 and 125, and the remaining three dealt face down in front of each player, to be looked
5 at later by the player. The dealer also deals two cards into the two-card receiving boxes 117, 119 in the “DEALER HAND” designated region of the gaming table layout to create a dealer hand 115, which is a community hand that may be optionally played by any player in place of the their own first two cards dealt into boxes 123 and 125. Preferably the card dealt into box 117 is dealt face down, and the card dealt into box 119 is dealt face up and thus exposed to view of the
10 players.

After examining the third, fourth and fifth cards (but not the first and second cards dealt face down into boxes 123 and 125), a player has an option to either fold and forfeit the ante wager, or place an additional bet equal to twice the ante wager in order to continue play of the hand. If the player folds, the dealer will clear all five cards comprising the player’s hand and will
15 collect the ante wager. If the player desires to continue the game, then the player designates whether he or she opts to play her own first two cards (dealt into boxes 123 and 125) or the dealer’s cards (dealt into boxes 117 and 119) by opting to place the bet wager in either the player hand bet region 134 or the dealer hand bet region 136. If a player opts to place the bet wager in the dealer hand region, then the dealer will clear the cards in boxes 123 and 125 of the player’s
20 hand.

If a player does not fold, but instead places the additional bet wager into region 134 or 136, the player arranges his or her third, fourth and fifth cards in the desired order in boxes 127,

129, and 131. Preferably the player places the three cards face down. In an alternate version of the game, the player is not given the option of arranging the three cards within the boxes 127, 129, and 131. The dealer will then turn over the face down card in the boxes 117 and 119 of the dealer's hand and then will turn over the face down cards in the player's hand, preferably in reverse order (i.e., cards 5, 4, 3 and also cards 2 and 1 if the player has placed the bet wager in the player's hand.)

The dealer then determines winning players and pays wagers according to whether the player achieved certain predetermined winning card combinations, as set forth in the following tables, with the symbols used throughout the pay tables as defined in the Legend below:

10

Legend

C Cherry

P Plum

O Orange

15 L Lemon

B Triple Bar

* Any other card

Three Reel Game Payout Table – (Cards 3, 4, and 5)

20

<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
CC*	1 to 1
PP*	1 to 1

	OO*	1 to 1
	LL*	1 to 1
	BB*	3 to 1
	CCC	2 to 1
5	PPP	3 to 1
	OOO	4 to 1
	LLL	5 to 1
	BBB	10 to 1

10 The foregoing payouts are paid on the ante wager. If the player's hand does not match any of the winning combinations in the Three Reel Game Payout Table, the player loses the ante wager. Regardless of whether the player has won or lost on the ante wager, the bet wager remains in action, to be determined by the following Five Reel Payout Tables, using either the player's first two cards, or the two cards from the dealer hand as cards 1 and 2, depending upon
15 the prior election of the player:

Five Reel Pay Table – 3 Card Payouts (Cards 1, 2, and 3)

	<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
	CCC	3 to 1
20	PPP	4 to 1
	OOO	5 to 1
	LLL	5 to 1

BBB 20 to 1

Five Reel Pay Table – 4 Card Payouts (Cards 1, 2, 3, and 4)

<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
5 CCCC	5 to 1
PPPP	6 to 1
OOOO	10 to 1
LLLL	10 to 1
BBBB	100 to 1

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Five Reel Pay Table – 5 Card Payouts (Cards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
15 CCCCC	10 to 1
PPPPP	15 to 1
OOOOO	50 to 1
LLLLL	50 to 1
BBBBB	1000 to 1

The foregoing payouts are paid on the bet wager. It will be appreciated that the foregoing 3 card and 4 card pay tables are dependent upon the order in which the cards are located in the boxes, and thus, are dependent upon each player's selective arrangement of his or her third, fourth, or fifth cards in a desired order within boxes 127, 129, and 131.

In addition to the ante and bet wagers, each player also has an option to place an optional wager for a progressive jackpot, preferably at the same time as placement of the ante wager, prior to the dealing of any cards. Progressive jackpot wagers are settled according to the following pay tables:

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Progressive Pay Table – 3 Card Payouts (Cards 1, 2, and 3)

10

<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
CCC	2 to 1
PPP	3 to 1
OOO	4 to 1
LLL	4 to 1
BBB	15 to 1

Progressive Pay Table – 4 Card Payouts (Cards 1, 2, 3, and 4)

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<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
CCCC	3 to 1
PPPP	6 to 1
OOOO	10 to 1
LLLL	10 to 1
BBBB	250 to 1

Progressive Pay Table – 5 Card Payouts (Cards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

<u>Hand</u>	<u>Payout Odds</u>
CCCCC	10 to 1
5 PPPPP	40 to 1
OOOOO	125 to 1
LLLLL	125 to 1
BBBBB	Current meter amount

10 The first two cards (either the player's own first two cards or the dealer hand) that a player opts to play are used in determination of both the second bet wager and the progressive wager. Again, it should be appreciated that the foregoing 3 card and 4 card pay tables are dependent upon the order in which the cards are located in the boxes, and thus, are dependent upon each player's selective arrangement of his or her third, fourth, or fifth cards within the
15 boxes 127, 129, and 131. In the event a player folds and does not elect to place the second wager, the player loses both the ante and the progressive wagers.

Those skilled in the art will recognize that the payoffs and winning combinations can be varied, as desired. Additionally, other currencies can be used and more than one unit can be wagered up to any maximum set by the house.

20 It will be recognized by those skilled in the art from the present disclosure that the use of a shuffling machine, the number of card decks and the particular shuffling employed can be

varied, as desired. Additionally, less frequent shuffling can be provided by using multiple decks such that the dealer could deal several games prior to reshuffling.

It will be similarly recognized by those skilled in the art from the present disclosure that the number of cards used in each game can be varied. For example, more or less than five card 5 receiving boxes may be provided. While the payout tables provided above are preferred, it will be recognized by those skilled in the art from the present disclosure that other payout tables may be used, if desired.

The present game provides the excitement of slot machine play in a table gaming environment. It also provides the opportunity to make several wagers for a single deal in order to 10 increase the number of wagers or gaming decisions which are made per unit time.

In addition to play as a live casino table game, the casino table game of the present invention may be played in an electronic format on a video gaming device of the type well known type used in connection with the play of video poker. As is well known, such devices display representations of playing cards on electronic video screens, shuffle and deal cards, and resolve 15 and pay wagers pursuant to program control instructions stored in ROM and/or RAM and operated under the control of a computer microprocessor. In connection with the electronic video version a player will use a touch screen or control buttons on the device to place wagers and elect either the player or dealer hand. Where the video game is designed for play by only a single player, the dealer hand is not a communal hand in the sense that it may be used by different 20 players. In the video game, the dealer hand may be designated simply as one of two alternate player's hands. As the wagers of the card game of the present invention are determined solely with reference to predetermined payout tables, without requiring a comparison of the player's

cards to either another player's cards or to a dealer's cards, the game is particularly well suited for play in an electronic video game format.

It is to be understood, however, that even though numerous characteristics and advantages of the present invention have been set forth in the foregoing description, together with 5 details of the structure and function of the invention, the disclosure is illustrative only, and changes may be made in detail, especially in matters of shape, size and arrangement of parts within the principles of the invention to the full extent indicated by the broad general meaning of the terms in which the appended claims are expressed.